Washington State Department of Health

ELABORATIONS

News and Issues for Washington's Clinical Laboratories

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Proficiency Testing Report Review Tips

by Lori Hudson, DOH/LQA

Proficiency testing (PT) is an essential part of the laboratory quality assessment program. Reviewing the results of each PT event provides an opportunity for training and competency assessment, and provides an overview of the accuracy of the laboratory testing. In order to comply with Medical Test Site (MTS) rules and the federal CLIA regulations, the laboratory must show evidence of a prompt review and, if indicated, corrective action taken in response to PT failures or ungraded results. The laboratory must review the entire PT report in detail since the summary page does not indicate the details about PT performance. For example, the summary page might show a score of 100%, but a careful review of the detailed report may reveal that the actual PT test results are flagged, coded or ungraded, and the laboratory performance may actually be failing.

There are several reasons that a PT provider may not grade a proficiency testing result:

- No consensus between peers
- No consensus between experts
- The peer group may be too small
- No method code or the incorrect method code was listed by the laboratory
- No instrument code or the incorrect instrument code was listed by the laboratory, or
- Other problems

When the proficiency testing result is not graded by the PT provider, it must be evaluated by the laboratory. The lab must review the summary booklet for the PT event and read the explanation given for the error codes listed on the PT report. The summary booklets are generally available on-line if a copy is not sent with your PT results. Consider the following during the review and assessment process:

- Are the results within the expected range?
- Do the results reveal a shift, drift or trend? Check for a pattern and use statistical tools such as SDI and CV.

If you find that you have outliers, problems, shifts, drifts or trends, consider the following:

- Was there a clerical or transcription error? Check the results tape, manual log or instrument report versus what you submitted to the proficiency testing company, and check that what you submitted is reflected accurately on the PT provider's report.
- Are the method and instrument codes accurate?
- Are the decimals and reporting units accurate?
- Is your peer group large enough to obtain an accurate assessment of your testing?

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Inside This Issue

Practice Guidelines

The following practice guidelines have been developed by the Clinical Laboratory Advisory Council. They can be accessed at the following website:
www.doh.wa.gov/lqa.htm

Anemia	Lipid Screening
ANA	PAP Smear
Bioterrorism Event Mgmt	Point-of-Care Testing
Bleeding Disorders	PSA
Chlamydia	Rash Illness
Diabetes	Red Cell Transfusion
Group A Strep Pharyngitis	Renal Disease
Group B Streptococcus	STD
Hepatitis	Thyroid
HIV	Tuberculosis
Infectious Diarrhea	Urinalysis
Intestinal Parasites	Wellness

Notifiable Conditions Tuberculosis Reporting Change

by DOH Tuberculosis Program/Services

The DOH TB Program/Services is in the process of transferring the reporting of laboratory positive smear/culture results from the Public Health Laboratories (PHL) in Shoreline, WA to the TB Program in Olympia. Effective January 1, 2007, the following changes will apply:
Laboratories: Reports of positive AFB smears and TB isolates will be taken by the DOH Olympia TB Program, and will no longer be the responsibility of the PHL. This will require changes to the WAC Notifiable Conditions poster/chart originally published for Washington State laboratories as follows: the telephone number given for reporting of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* in the code legend in the bottom left hand side of the poster should be changed to:

[&iii] Notifiable to DOH - Reporting Line (360)236-3397
or TB Reporting Fax Line (360)236-3405

Currently the *Notifiable Conditions & Washington's Laboratories* poster/chart lists the PHL phone number for reporting suspected TB specimens. The transfer of reporting duties will result in a change in mail, phone and fax numbers. **The new DOH numbers are: phone (360)236-3397 and fax (360)236-3405**.

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Website addresses:
DOH home page: http://www.doh.wa.gov
LQA home page: http://www.doh.wa.gov/lqa.htm
PHL home page:
http://www.doh.wa.gov/EHSPHL/PHL/default.htm

A letter of notification will be mailed and faxed to the TB Core Labs and other laboratories that perform tests on AFB positive specimens as well as all local health departments.

Content of documentation accompanying specimen submission (WAC 246-101-215):

- Type of specimen tested
- Name of reporting laboratory
- Telephone number of reporting laboratory
- Date specimen collected
- Requesting health care provider's name
- Requesting health care provider's phone number or address, or both
- Test result
- Name of patient (if available), or patient identifier
- Sex of patient (if available)
- Date of birth of patient (if available)
- Address of patient (if available)
- Telephone number of patient (if available)
- Other information of epidemiological value (if available)

Each laboratory should prepare a subculture to be retained for its own use, and send the original isolate to the PHL. The PHL can accept either liquid or solid media.

Content of notifications for positive cultures or preliminary test results (WAC 246-101-225):

- Date specimen collected
- Source of specimen tested
- Date specimen received by reporting laboratory
- Test result
- Submitter accession number
- Name of reporting laboratory
- Telephone number of reporting laboratory
- Requesting health care provider's name
- Requesting health care provider's phone number or address, or both

Client Information:
Name of patient (if available) or patient identifier; sex of patient (if available); date of birth or age of the patient (if available).

Proficiency Testing Report Review Tips

- Was there a technical error? Check the QC and calibration for the day the test was run, etc. Rerun the test if the sample is still available and viable.
- Was the sample integrity maintained? Check that the temperature, storage and shipping requirements were met.
- Were the samples tested within the acceptable time frame?
- Were the samples reconstituted properly, if applicable, and was the dilution made correctly (i.e., using a volumetric pipette)?
- How did other labs perform using the same instrument, and how did your results compare versus all methods for the test?
- Was there a random error (also known as normal statistical variation)? Statistically, 1 out of 20 results will fall outside the acceptable limit.

The laboratory must keep the written documentation of this review and any corrective action taken. The review should be signed and dated by the person performing the review and also by the MTS director.

For more helpful information regarding proficiency testing and other related topics, see the LQA website at http://www.doh.wa.gov/LQA.htm.

Gram Stain Training Class: A Practical Approach

Course Date: December 13, 2006. Registration will begin at 8:00 a.m. Class will start promptly at 8:30 a.m. and end at 3:30 p.m.

Who Should Attend: Individuals who are currently performing the Gram stain procedure on clinical specimens and would like a review/update and individuals interested in learning to perform Gram stains on clinical specimens.

Continuing Education Units: Students will receive 0.6 CEUs for completion of this course. Applicants must plan to attend the entire workshop to receive CEUs. Accreditation is provided through the State of California Department of Health Services, Office of Laboratory Field Services, 2151 Berkley Way- Annex 12, Berkley, CA 94704-1011.

Tuition: $115 (By Dec. 06, 2006); $125 (After Dec. 06, 2006)

Location: The course is held at the DOH Public Health Laboratories in Shoreline. A map and driving directions will be sent to each registered student. All laboratory materials, manuals, and use of equipment are included. Students are responsible for their own transportation, meals, and lodging.

Course Content: The course will cover the performance, reading, and interpretation of the Gram stain when used on clinical specimens. The lecture portion of the course will cover clinical uses and significance of the Gram stain, quality control and quality assurance, and bacterial and host cell morphology. In the laboratory section of this course, participants will have hands-on experience performing the Gram stain procedure, examining and reporting Gram stains of unknown organisms, and observing common bacterial and host cell types in a variety of clinical specimens.

Gram Stain Training Course Registration Form

Name:_____

Employer:_____

Employer Address:_____

City:_____ State: _____ Zip:_____

Work Phone:_____FAX:_____

E-mail:_____ Message Phone:_____

How to Register: Complete the registration form and mail to the **Department of Health Training Program, 1610 NE 150th Street, PO Box 550501, Shoreline, WA 98155-9701;** fax to **(206) 418-5445;** or e-mail to **phl.training@doh.wa.gov** A registration form is available at our web site: **www.doh.wa.gov/ehsphl/phl/training/train.htm**. DO NOT SEND MONEY WITH YOUR REGISTRATION FORM.

TB Reporting Change for Laboratories Effective 01/01/2007

REPORT ALL
PRESUMPTIVE AND CONFIRMED
LABORATORY RESULTS OF
Mycobacterium tuberculosis
within two (2) days to:

Phone: (360) 236-3397
Fax: (360) 236-3405
Address: DOH TB Program
PO Box 47837
Olympia, WA 98504

see article on page 2

Calendar of Events

PHL Training Classes:
(http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehsphl/phl/training/train.htm)

Basic Gram Stain Training
December 13, 2006 Shoreline

13th Annual Clinical Laboratory Conference
November 13, 2006 Seattle

2007 WSSCLS/NWSSAMT Spring Meeting
April 26-28, 2007 Kennewick

Northwest Medical Laboratory Symposium
October 24-27, 2007 Seattle

Contact information for the events listed above can be found on page 2. The Calendar of Events is a list of upcoming conferences, deadlines, and other dates of interest to the clinical laboratory community. If you have events that you would like to have included, please mail them to ELABORATIONS at the address on page 2. Information must be received at least one month before the scheduled event. The editor reserves the right to make final decisions on inclusion.

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